National Commission for Other Backward Classes

4909. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Commission for Other Backward Classes has been headless and memberless for the last several years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and by when its Chairman and Members are likely to be appointed;

(c) whether Government propose to review its mandate as at present the Commission examines requests for inclusion of a class as a backward in the list; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (c) No, Sir.

(b) and (d) Do not arise.

Number of dwarfs in the country

4910. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pjeased to state:

(a) the number of dwarfs in the country, State-wise;

(b) the facilities that Government are providing to dwarfs;

(c) whether there is any demand from any State Government for inclusion of dwarfs in the category of "physically handicapped"; and

(d) if so, the details of request received and the action Government propose to take thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) Statistics regarding the number of dwarfs in the country are not available.

(b) These Dwarfs certified as persons with Locomotor Disability, are eligible for the same benefits as other persons with Locomotor Disabilities.

(c) No such demand has been received from any State Government. There is no need for such demand since dwarfs are already included in the category of physically disabled as persons with locomotor disability.

(d) Does not arise.

Tribal artisans under new WTO regime

4911. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the traditional tribal artisans would be protected under new WTO regime;

(b) whether Government are considering to unveil a new tribal welfare policy to address the concerns of the tribals; and

(c) the protection being provided to ensure that tribal people would not be uprooted from their traditional vocations under the new trade regime?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) to (c) As indicated by the Ministry of Commerce, under the provisions of the TRIPS Agreement of WTO, protection is provided to seven categories of intellectual property rights, *viz.* copyright and related rights, patents, geographical indications, trademarks, industrial designs, layout-designs of integrated circuits and undisclosed information. In addition, protection is also provided to new plant varieties. Works of traditional tribal artisans are prior art and their traditional knowledge fall under public domain and therefore these do not belong to any of the above seven categories of intellectual property rights. As such, at present no protection is available to works of traditional tribal artisans as well as their traditional knowledge under the TRIPS Agreements of WTO.

Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) is running a tribes shop for marketing tribal arts and crafts for benefit of scheduled tribes artisans.

The Department of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and Culture also implement a scheme of "Promotion and Dissemination of tribal/Folk Art and Culture" which covers the well-identified and urgent need for the preservation, promotion and dissemination of tribal art and culture.